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Message Text

SECRET

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15
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
---------- 117469
R 052041Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6885
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T PARIS 32957

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, XGDS-4
TAGS: PFOR, UR, FR
SUBJECT: FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS: FURTHER SOVIET VIEW

REF: PARIS 31969

1. FOR SS AND MOSCOW: BECAUSE OF DIRECT VULNERABILITY OF SOURCE REQUEST SPECIALLY CAREFUL HANDLING THIS MESSAGE.

2. SOVIET EMBASSY SOURCE SUBSTANTIALLY CONFIRMS REFTEL. ELYSEE HAD PRESSED SOVIETS FOR BREZHNEV VISIT BEFORE END OF THIS YEAR. MOSCOW HAD DECLINED, OSTENSIBLY FOR CALENDAR REASONS BUT REALLY BECAUSE "CERTAIN KEY SENIOR PEOPLE" IN MOSCOW STILL HOPED TO EXACT SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS FROM FRENCH IN RETURN FOR VISIT. AS A RESULT VISIT NOW NOT LIKELY TO TAKE PLACE UNTIL "END OF FIRST HALF OF NEXT YEAR."

3. ASKED WHAT, AT THIS STAGE, WERE MAIN THINGS USSR WANTED FROM FRENCH, SOURCE REFERRED AS EXPECTED TO GREATER FRENCH SUPPORT FOR MAJOR SOVIET DISARMAMENT INITIATIVES -- BUT ALSO SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THAT "SOME PEOPLE WANT FRENCH TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL POSSIBLE
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DISARMAMENT FORA, INCLUDING THE GENEVA DISARMAMENT CON-

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FERENCE AND MBFR." SOURCE THOUGHT LATTER IDEA WAS PARTICULARLY DUBIOUS PROPOSITION FROM VIEWPOINT SOVIET INTERESTS, SINCE FRENCH IN MBFR WOULD ONLY ADD NEW STIFFENING FACTOR TO WESTERN POSITION. (COMMENT: REFERENCE TO MBFR MAY THROW A SHADE MORE LIGHT ON CURIOUS ALLUSION REPORTED PARA 4 REFTEL.)

4. INTERESTINGLY, SOURCE ALSO VOLUNTEERED VAGUE REFERENCE TO RENEWED SOVIET EFFORTS IN COURSE LAST YEAR TO OBTAIN FRENCH AGREEMENT TO SIGN FORMAL FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH THE USSR, IN SHAPE OF A TEXT INVOLVING CONSIDERABLE VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, INCLUDING MILITARY ONES. EFFORT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL AND SOURCE THINKS MAY NOW HAVE BEEN ABANDONED. (COMMENT: WE ARE STRUCK BY COINCIDENCE THIS REFERENCE AND REPORT IN NOVEMBER 2 BROUSSINE NEWSLETTER, A RESPECTABLE FRENCH CIRCULAR CLOSE TO MAJORITY AND ELYSEE, SPECULATING THAT SOVIETS MAY AGAIN BE THINKING OF DUSTING OFF OLD FRIENDSHIP TREATY PROJECT TO DEEPEN DISTINCTION BETWEEN FRANCE AND OTHER ALLIES, AND AFFIRMING THAT IT WOULD NOT STAND CHANCE AT ELYSEE.)

5. ASKED WHETHER BREZHNEV VISIT WAS IN FACT CONTINGENT ON FRENCH CONCESSIONS, SOURCE THOUGHT PROBABLY NOT, SINCE BREZHNEV WOULD NOT WANT TO RISK RESULTANT RUPTURE. INDEED SOURCE SEEMED CONFIDENT BREZHNEV WOULD IN END COME IN ANY CASE AND WOULD HAVE TO CONTENT HIMSELF WITH CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS AND OTHER MINOR FRENCH GESTURES. THERE IS, MOREOVER, SOURCE SAID CERTAIN CONTINUING ARGUMENT WITHIN SOVIET ESTABLISHMENT WHETHER MOSCOW, WHICH CONTINUES TO HAVE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES WITH MARCHAIS AND IS DUBIOUS ABOUT LONGER TERM PROSPECTS FRENCH LEFT, SHOULD NOT IN EFFECT "BE NICER" TO GISCARD IN ORDER TO HELP HIM. SOURCE SPECULATED THAT FOR SUCH REASONS DATE BREZHNEV VISIT MAY IN FACT STILL BE ADVANCED AND VISIT COME OFF SOONER. SOURCE NOTED THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR CHERVONENKO HAD JUST, RATHER ABRUPTLY, CANCELLED PLANS TO TAKE A COUPLE OF WEEKS VACATION AFTER THE NOVEMBER 7 FESTIVITIES AND SUGGESTED THAT THIS CHANGE IN PLANS COULD BE CONNECTED WITH POSSIBLE FURTHER

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REVIEW SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD GISCARD.
RUSH

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